

Foreword by **Barbara Ehrenreich**

Berkeley's Betrayal

WAGES AND WORKING CONDITIONS AT CAL

by **Gretchen Purser, Amy Schalet
and Ofer Sharone**

with the help of **Teresa Gowan
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FOREWORD by Barbara Ehrenreich

Caution: The report that you are about to read may be painfully disillusioning.

Berkeley, the flagship campus of the University of California, enjoys a reputation as a brave outpost of liberal values. On campus, you can sip a latte at the Free Speech Movement Café, grab lunch at the Cesar Chavez snack bar, and revel in the freedom of Sproul Plaza. Students and new faculty members are still drawn to Berkeley by its proud tradition of resistance to injustice. Whatever careers they take up after graduation, students expect Berkeley to be a place where the imagination can flourish in an atmosphere of mutual respect and intellectual freedom.

But there is another side to Berkeley. In 2001, a group of graduate students in sociology set out to learn from the kinds of people who are hardly ever listened to, or even noticed, by most students and faculty. They began systematically interviewing Berkeley's vast staff of food service workers, custodial workers, lab technicians, administrative assistants, parking lot attendants, and many others. For a few weeks in the fall of 2001, I joined this group of inquisitive sociology students as a consultant and team member, participating in interviews and in the group's efforts to understand the university in a way most of us had not thought of it before—as the employer of people.

What we found did not fit our cherished image of Berkeley as a great liberal center of learning. Over and over, members of our group talked to people struggling to make ends meet on wages that fall well below a living wage for the Berkeley area—commuting long distances to save on rent, crowding into inadequate housing, taking second jobs. We also found a managerial environment that is in many ways hostile to employees—indifferent to their health and safety, punitive to those who are injured on the job, and sometimes overtly abusive in manner. Equally shocking, for an educational institution, we found that there was little reward for, or encouragement of, employees' efforts to expand their own education and skills.

These conditions are not, of course, unique to Berkeley. All over the country, students have begun a dialogue with campus employees and have been learning, to their chagrin, that the flip side of what is touted as educational excellence is often economic misery. At such diverse places as Harvard, Miami University of Ohio, Virginia Commonwealth University, Yale, the University of North Carolina, Mt. Holyoke and scores of others, students have been organizing in support of campus workers' demands for better pay, union recognition, and more respectful treatment.

What these students are saying, in effect, is: We're not comfortable learning in a classroom that was cleaned at night by someone who may not earn enough to pay rent. We can't concentrate on preparing to join the professional elite while all around us people remain stuck at the bottom of the occupational hierarchy. We lose our appetite when the cafeteria food is prepared and served by people who have trouble feeding their own children.

This growing campus movement for economic justice comes, unfortunately, at a time of growing financial constraints on state universities. Students are being forced to pay higher tuition every year; many junior—and adjunct—faculty are severely underpaid themselves. What this means is that there is no choice now: The movement to improve the lives and working conditions of campus employees must be part of a larger campaign to guarantee the resources for higher education in general.

But we cannot postpone the issues raised by this report. The mistreatment and underpayment of the people who make a campus like U.C. Berkeley's work from day to day undercut all the ideals of a liberal education. You can't have freedom of discourse in an environment where some people are never allowed to speak up. You can't pretend to value community when some members are treated as if they are disposable.

The purpose of this report, then, is nothing less than to restore the conscience—and save the soul—of a great university.

INTRODUCTION: BEHIND THE STATELY FAÇADE

*A*fter four years of steady service as a food service worker at the University of California at Berkeley, Sam makes twelve dollars and seven cents an hour. Approaching his fiftieth birthday, Sam is barely able to make ends meet. He does not own a home. “No, of course not. I stay in a little studio apartment, and I have great grandchildren. It’s not easy. By the time I pay my rent and buy my food and put gas in my car, I’m already waiting for the next paycheck two days after maybe I’ve gotten the [last] paycheck.” Sam and his co-workers kid around about their dire financial straits, but meanwhile the situation is no joke. “Every now and then I get to go to a movie or something to just kind of break up the boredom, but it’s not very often that I do anything different than go to work and come home.... It’s not easy. It’s not easy at all.”

The standard of living that Sam’s salary permits him is a far cry from the one he had anticipated when he started working as a young man, thirty years ago. Back then, Sam had what he considered to be a good job at Ford down in Milpitas. That was when “you came to work and did your job. You automatically got put on [steady employment] and had benefits ... you had medical, dental and all of that. You had a paycheck every week and you didn’t have to worry about getting paid all of your money, which is a bad problem here [at Cal]. You got your vacation without any hassle.” Sam worked happily at Ford until 1983 when the plant closed. Before he got laid off, Sam had been making thirteen dollars and thirty nine cents an hour, not at all an unreasonable salary given the Bay Area cost of living at that time. He never imagined that twenty years later his hourly wage would be lower, even without adjusting for inflation.

But there are things that are worse about working at Cal than lousy pay. Sam’s supervisors are still operating in “the old mode of what they say is what’s done no matter what.” Although official U.C. Berkeley guidelines dictate that every employee must have a clear and precise job description, Sam’s supervisor regularly assigns him tasks that are outside his job description without paying him for his extra work. This situation could not have been farther from Sam’s expectation when he started working at the university. He was glad, he told himself: “This is a state job, this is a steady job, this is a good job. Once I get in there and show these people what I can do and that I’m willing to do it, everything will be okay. Because that’s the way it’s been at every other place I’ve ever worked.” But Sam was disappointed to learn that how well a worker does—financially or otherwise—depends not on how hard he tries, but on the whim of his supervisors. “That is the sad truth. We are just at their mercy.”

Sam's story is not unique. Behind the stately façade of America's most prestigious public university, custodians, food service workers, groundskeepers, and clerical workers toil under conditions that betray the very principles which we want our university to embody. And yet, students, professors, and administrators know surprisingly little about the sacrifices made and injuries suffered by those who clean their classrooms and dormitories, cook their meals, maintain the grounds, and record their grades.

As sociology graduate students at the University of California at Berkeley, we usually focus our scholarly attention on "the world out there," far beyond Sproul Plaza and Sather Gate. In our capacity as graduate student instructors, we encourage our students to explore the causes of poverty, the repercussions of inequality, and the often invisible power dynamics in our society. Rarely do we, as scholars and teachers in the making, explore the social ills that exist right here in our cherished halls of learning.

This project began when we realized that all was not in fact well with the labor force at U.C. Berkeley. Like most members of our society, we came to the university taking for granted that even as serious problems pervade the society around us, the university community is a protected space where the dictates of money-making give way to the mission of creating an inclusive educational community. It is easy to believe U.C. Chancellor Robert Berdahl when he says that being a university employee means "you work in a stimulating and vibrant environment rich in diverse ideas, talents, and public service." University policies, Berdahl explains, promote "an environment of trust, openness, responsibility and tolerance, so that a sense of community can prevail."¹ Indeed, most workers are proud to work at such a prestigious university and are deeply committed to performing the everyday tasks necessary for its ongoing functioning. They appreciate working on Berkeley's beautiful campus and enjoy interacting with students. Donald, a long-time custodian, likes being around the students. "To me," he says, "everyone's like family." Samantha, a student affairs officer, agrees. "The students are the best part of my job."

Many workers, like most students and professors, also came to U.C. Berkeley with high expectations about contributing to a world-class educational institution. What we discovered, however, is that their expectations were quickly crushed once they got on the job. Not wanting to complain, they tell cautiously at first, but passionately once they get going about finding themselves on the brink of poverty and routinely facing dangerous and degrading employment practices. But their disappointment extends beyond their own personal injuries; many workers feel betrayed and disillusioned by the university's narrow focus on the financial bottom line, undermining the ideals that the university has long held dear—fairness, objectivity, safety, dignity and respect. Kim, a student affairs officer, has come to expect that the "university will pretty much do anything for money." "At some point," she assures us, "Sather Gate will be called McDonald's Arches. The question is, for how much?"

Workers' experiences at U.C. Berkeley can only be understood against the backdrop of the widespread corporatization of American universities. This transformation of the university reflects the rise over the last three decades of a free market fundamentalism which posits that unregulated capitalism is the best system, both morally and practically, for organizing all spheres of society.² We expect universities to be qualitatively different from for-profit corporations, with a distinct set of ethical aims, including the pursuit of knowledge, the investigation of moral and social problems, the molding of young adults into good democratic citizens, and the cultivation of community. However, the organizational and ideological blurring of universities with for-profit corporations has been occurring at an alarming and ever-increasing pace.

One result of this corporatization has been the widespread adoption of labor practices more commonly associated with Wal-Mart or McDonald's than with first class institutions of higher education. As Sandra, a maintenance worker, told us: "The university has a Wal-Mart mentality. Workers are totally disposable."

As we became aware of the increasing corporatization of the university, we formed a graduate student research collective and worked with the guidance of author and journalist Barbara Ehrenreich. Our collective built on a confluence of movements. We were inspired by the student initiatives for economic justice springing up around the country, especially the movement for a living wage at Harvard University. We were also emboldened by calls to sociologists, voiced by prominent members of our faculty, to conduct *Public Sociology*—sociological research that seeks to open up public dialogue about the pressing issues of our time. We thus decided to use the tools available to us as budding social scientists to study and report on the working conditions and everyday experiences of University workers.

Our methodology consisted of conducting in-depth interviews with sixty-three U.C. Berkeley employees over the course of the 2001-2002 academic year. A subset of these interviews was conducted by U.C. Berkeley undergraduates who participated in a seminar on the welfare state and low-income work. Our interviewees, although not a random sample, represent a diverse cross-section of the university workforce; they varied in terms of their occupation, length of employment, ethnic background, gender, union participation and marital status. We made contact with workers in one of three ways: we directly approached workers either before or during their work shift, we received referrals from workers we interviewed, and we made contact with workers at union rallies held on campus. All of the names and identifying details of the interviewees included in this report have been changed to ensure confidentiality.

The workers we contacted were glad that students were undertaking such a project and encouraged our efforts. "You guys are doing the right thing by trying to expose the working conditions on this campus," Jerry, a custodian, said at the end of the interview. Yet, as surprising as this sounds at a place like U.C. Berkeley, birthplace of the Free Speech Movement, several workers hesitated when they were approached and ultimately declined to participate in the study, saying they were unsure whether or not they were "allowed" to speak with us. "I need to ask my supervisor," one female custodian replied nervously. Many of those we interviewed admitted that, due to either fear or cynicism, they "just keep their mouths shut" and refrain from speaking up for themselves in the workplace. "I don't say nothing to make them upset. I just do the work and don't complain because I don't want any problems," Maria explains, worried about losing her family's only source of income. Her co-worker, Eduardo, elaborates: "There are many that are scared and that don't bring issues up because they think U.C. is not going to do anything anyways. Or they don't want to say anything because they think U.C. is going to take it out on them."

In short, workers rarely complain in the course of their everyday work lives. They simply do not feel safe enough to do so. However, when given the chance to voice their discontent to interested listeners, and assured that no repercussions would follow, grievances poured out with a remarkable consistency in theme and sentiment. What this suggests is that while our sample is not random and our numbers are limited, those workers whom we interviewed articulate a sense of discontent with their working conditions that may be far more widespread and strongly felt than those who bear ultimate responsibility for these conditions would guess.

Three troubling themes emerged from these interviews. First, wages have not kept up with the rising costs of living; many workers cannot afford the basic necessities of life—reasonable housing, childcare, and transportation. Second, the conditions of work are unacceptably dangerous. Once injured, workers are treated as if they are disposable and do not receive the physical and emotional care they deserve. Finally, many workers, as the comments above suggest, report routinely being treated with disrespect by their supervisors. The lack of standardized procedures leaves workers subject to the luck of the draw: some supervisors are fair; others make unreasonable demands and take advantage of their power.

Organized around these three main themes of wages, health and safety, and dignity and respect, this report tells a story about the university that is seldom told, presented through the voices of those who are seldom heard. With the publication and dissemination of this report, we hope to accomplish three concrete objectives:

EDUCATION: to educate students, faculty, parents and alumni about the wages and working conditions of the U.C. Berkeley workforce.

MOBILIZATION: in coalition with campus unions and other student groups, to mobilize the collective energies of the campus community to send an unequivocal message to university administrators that it is unacceptable for members of our community to work for less than a living wage, to be endangered by their work, or to be accorded less than the dignity and respect any other member of the university community would expect and deserve.

CHANGE: to call on the university administration to take ten steps—outlined in the conclusion of this report—that will improve the wages and working conditions of university employees.

CHAPTER 1: WAGES

“We’re all sleepwalkers!” Jerry exclaims. “Some of these guys come in here and have huge black rings under their eyes. They look like they haven’t slept for weeks.”

Jerry works as a custodian at the University of California, Berkeley, making \$11.20 an hour. Like many of his colleagues, he cannot make ends meet on the meager wages provided by the university and has had to take on a second job. Jerry continues: “The pay at the university is lousy. They get away with it because they offer good benefits.” “All of us [custodians] are working multiple jobs. Many of my coworkers juggle three jobs to make ends meet and by the time they get here, they are sleepwalking.”

This is not the first time Jerry has worked for U.C. Berkeley. Back in 1991, he worked as a custodian for a year and a half, making \$10.63 per hour. He quit when he moved to another part of the country. When he returned to the Bay Area last year, Jerry decided to take a position at the university again because it was a union job that offered job stability and benefits for his family. Jerry appreciates these aspects of his work. At the same time, he is dismayed that his starting salary increased by a mere 57 cents over the course of a decade.

The University of California, Berkeley is not only one of the most respected research universities in the world, it is also the third largest employer in the East Bay and the fifth largest employer in the Bay Area. We expect a public institution dedicated to education to teach by example, and in its capacity as an employer that means paying a fair wage sufficient to support a worker and his or her family in dignity. As graduate students we were deeply disappointed when we discovered that the fundamental values of fairness, community and respect that we discuss in seminars and teach to undergraduates are being systematically violated by the university’s employment practices. Far from setting an example, the university’s pay is generally *lower* than the pay of other commensurable institutions in both the private and public sectors.³ These inadequate wages have forced many employees to forego comfortable housing, physical and emotional health, personal goals and aspirations, and family well-being and integrity.

FINANCIAL SQUEEZE

“We’re all freaked out about money!” says Susan, an administrative assistant, only somewhat jokingly when asked to describe how workers like herself fare with the wages they receive. Indeed, a large number of the workers we spoke with are “freaked out about money,” struggling to make ends meet on the meager wages they earn at the university.

Charles, a food service worker in a university dormitory since 1989, says that his wages “allow him to live, but not comfortably.” He lives “paycheck to paycheck.” Charles doesn’t have enough money to adequately clothe himself; he has been waiting for some time, until “the next paycheck to buy new shoes.” Linda, a clerical worker, explains that, with her new car payments, she and her husband are “under the gun financially.” She cannot afford regular visits to her aging mother in Colorado and she is worried that she will not be able to afford the braces the orthodontist says her son needs. Cynthia, a member of the support staff in the law school, supports only herself. Still, with wages not keeping up with the rising costs of living, she has had to cut back on many things she enjoys. For example, she no longer goes shopping for new clothes and she recently decided not to get a Christmas tree this year in order to be able to save money.

Susan is an African-American single mother of two children. Her pre-tax salary amounts to approximately \$3,000 a month. She lives in a three bedroom condominium in El Sobrante, a small community twelve miles north of Berkeley and just east of Richmond, where she pays a \$1,450 monthly mortgage. She and her two children share the space with her cousin and his wife who sleep in the living room. After taxes Susan finds herself shelling out over half her income for housing. “So, let’s not talk about movies or fast-food because I can’t afford them.” Last week, there was a gospel concert in Berkeley that Susan would love to have gone to but “I can’t go there,” Susan says, laughing but with palpable disappointment. If Susan were to receive a pay hike, she would spend the money on tires for her car, braces for her son, and most importantly, she would save some money for her children’s college education. But these additional expenses, which are hardly luxuries, are currently well beyond her reach. Susan is uncomfortable discussing the difficulties of her financial situation. Throughout the interview, she fiddles with her computer as she discusses her life, avoiding a show of feelings. But her despair is evident when she admits not being able to save for her children’s education and not knowing “what will happen with that.”

These workers are not alone in finding it impossible to cover the basics and afford the occasional treat with their wages. Using a realistic but bare-minimum formula that takes into account the cost of child-care, health care, transportation, food, housing, and taxes, the California Budget Project recently calculated that in 2003 a single parent supporting two children needed to earn a minimum of \$29.80 per hour to cover basic household expenses (not including education, entertainment and savings). For a family of four with two working parents, both would need to earn \$16.88 per hour in order to achieve a modest standard of living.⁴ Using 2004 University wage data, we calculated that over 1700 University workers are making less than the living wage of \$16.88 per hour. These include nearly 90% of all service workers and nearly 40% of all clerical workers. Even by the much lower standard set by the City of Berkeley’s living wage ordinance (\$10.76 per hour plus benefits), hundreds of campus employees still do not earn a living wage (see appendix).

SKYROCKETING RENTS AND STAGNANT WAGES

Many of the workers we interviewed report that finding adequate and affordable housing in the Bay Area for themselves and their families was a challenging, if not impossible, task. They often face extremely difficult choices about where and how to live.

Linda has worked at the university for close to 18 years. Despite her loyal working history, she can only afford a one-bedroom apartment in Alameda that she occupies with her husband and her 13-year-old son. She has seen her rent more than double over the last 17 years, from \$500 to \$1,100 a month. But her salary has not kept pace with this rise in the cost of living. While she struggles to make the monthly rent, Linda dreams of someday being able to afford an apartment where her son does not have to sleep in the living room, a situation that grants him no privacy and makes him feel “not normal” compared to his peers.

Linda can't provide what she believes is a dignified home for her son. Others, especially single workers without dependents, can't even afford an apartment of their own. Instead they find themselves having to double-up with roommates or members of their extended family. Colin, a food service worker who works in one of the student dormitories, lives with his sister and her husband in their Oakland apartment because “outrageous rents” prevent him from being able to afford a place of his own. James, another food service worker, is still living with his mother at the age of 33, which he feels is “embarrassing.”

Several other food service workers report living in highly overcrowded living situations. Andy, a parking lot attendant who works for a private company that is subcontracted by the university, explains that if it were not for his brother, he would be homeless. “See, eight dollars an hour isn't that much money. Especially living out here, but living with my brother helps me out a little. I also save money by not having a car. Living near campus lets me ride the bus. But it still doesn't make it much easier to pay the bills at the end of the month. The cost of living is too high here.” Finally, Ryan, a maintenance worker who has been with the university for nine years, is bitter and somewhat astonished that “even though I'm just supporting me and my cat, I had to bring in a roommate in order to make ends meet.”

Meanwhile, buying a home, that treasured marker of middle-class status, is completely out of reach for many U.C. workers. And coming to terms with the reality that their wages simply do not afford the American dream of homeownership, no matter how hard they work, makes workers feel insecure and unsafe. Marta, a maintenance worker who has been working at the university for seven years, fears that she may never be able to own a home:

I have been trying to save money for a long time for a mobile home, not a house because they are too expensive, just a mobile home. But, they too, are too expensive. I pay around \$1,100 a month for rent and it is hard for me to do just that because I have a lot of payments and...I pay the bills for everyone in my family...I thought about going to get [a second job] but my body is too old for it.

Samantha, a student affairs officer in one of the social science departments, also worries about her inability to purchase a home and what this means for her future:

I would like to buy a home. That's one of the main concerns at this point in my life. I'm getting older. I just kind of want to have a base. I want to be grounded a little bit more.

And one way of doing that is by owning a home. Particularly for people of color, that's one way to acquire wealth and that's what I want to do. I want to leave something for my children, if I can. I don't think I would feel secure until I actually own a home—until I actually have something I can call my own.

FAMILY WELL-BEING AND INTEGRITY

If their capacity to create a physically safe and comfortable home is strained, workers face an equally daunting task in establishing and nurturing intimate relationships on wages which make emotional ties with partners, children, parents, and friends difficult to maintain. For some U.C. workers, the idea of starting a family at all is inconceivable at their current income levels. Donald, a custodian, has hopes of being promoted to the position of “leader” in order to make a few more dollars per hour. As a single man, his wage right now is enough to make ends meet, but not enough to buy a house and start a family. Although he is certain that he wants both of these things, Donald can't right now because “to have a family, you need more money.” Donald's coworker, Bruno, shares his predicament. “In order to have a girlfriend,” Bruno explains, “I would need to have time and money, neither of which I currently have, given that I'm working two jobs and still have trouble paying the bills.”⁶

Those who do have children constantly worry about childcare and find it very difficult to afford. One respondent, Michael, a custodian, came to work at U.C. after being laid off from a job in the private sector. When his salary went from 18 to 11 dollars an hour, his family faced an impossible bind. Although his wife wanted to work outside the home, they came to the conclusion that they could not afford her doing so. The kinds of jobs she could get would not pay enough to cover the childcare expenses. Stuck in a catch-22, Michael confesses that he is sinking deeper and deeper into debt.

You want to know how I do it? I'll tell you. It's credit. Debt. They got me in collection, man. They're coming after me in collection and I can't pay it. Last week they took away my credit card. I don't go out anymore. I don't know. It's hard, man. It's very, very hard. They're killing me. Sometimes I think I'll kill myself [puts his finger to his head like a gun]. Sometimes I think I will. I don't know what else to do.

Marta, a maintenance worker who works a night shift, is raising her young grandson on her own. Because she cannot afford the costs of childcare, Marta relies on her parents to help care for her grandson while she is at work. However, Marta's parents often spend months at a time in Mexico with their other children. During these periods, she is forced to leave her grandson home alone without anyone to watch over him. Looking demoralized, Marta explains: “There is no alternative. I have problems finding anyone to take care of my grandson throughout the night. I can't find anyone that wants to work until two in the morning and the people that will do it demand more money than I can possibly afford. So, I don't know what else to do.”

Many of the workers we spoke with are forced into working staggered shifts in order to forego childcare expenses. Under these conditions, so-called family life has become a series of hurried encounters and messages left on the fridge. Santiago, a custodian, explains:

My wife and I decided that I would work during the night and she would work during the day so that I could take care of our son while she was at work and she would be

home with them during the night. It saves us a lot of money that way. I leave for work when she gets home from work: that is our pattern.

Ricardo, a custodian whose wife also works for the university as a maintenance worker in a residence hall, tells a similar story: “She works from 8 am until 5 pm, and I work from 5 pm until 1 am. We never see each other but at least one of us is always home with the kids. That way we do not have to pay for day care. It is the only way we can do it.”

Obviously this type of arrangement puts an enormous strain on family relations, as the story of Bonnie, another custodian, illustrates. Bonnie and her husband also work staggered shifts to avoid the cost of paying for childcare for their two children. Bonnie explains:

My kids constantly ask me why I work late. I tell them that I have to work late in order to take care of them. My husband, also, doesn't like me working late, but I have no choice. My family has no choice but to make do with the schedule. If I could, I would work in the mornings, but that would mean that my husband would have to find a job on the graveyard shift.

SLEEPWALKING THROUGH MULTIPLE JOBS

Many university employees take second, even third, jobs to make ends meet. This explains why, in Jerry's words at the start of this chapter, so many members of the service staff are sleepwalking on the job—they are so overworked by the time they start their shift that they are barely awake.

Abigail, an administrative assistant, has been a member of the university community for 21 years. As a single mother trying to make it on the inadequate wages she receives once per month, Abigail is sometimes forced to take sick days at the end of the month because she does not have enough bus money to get to work. To cope, Abigail has taken another job as a bartender at night and uses her tip money for transportation to and from work.

Ralph works three jobs in order to support himself and pay his rent of \$1100 per month for a one-bedroom apartment in Oakland. In addition to working as a custodian at the university, he works as a website manager and as a custodian in private buildings throughout Berkeley and Oakland. A typical day for Ralph begins by waking up at 5 in the morning, working at U.C. Berkeley from 6 am until 3 in the afternoon, followed by work from home on his computer business from 3:30 until 5:30, then eating dinner before leaving home around 6:30 pm to work his night custodial shift. Not surprisingly, Ralph sleeps an average of four to five hours per night.

Stacey, a clerical worker, has frequently had to find alternate sources of income since the wages she earns from the university do not cover basic costs. “Over the years I've had to work two jobs plenty of times,” she says, “especially when my two other boys were living at home, but I haven't had to in a couple of months. I don't like to work so much because I'm not able to spend time with my daughter if I can't be at home at night. I try not to when I can, but lots of times you just don't have a choice.”

THE HUNT FOR PARKING

Sometimes, the “small” things are the “big” things. And few things cause as much stress and outrage for U.C. Berkeley employees as the daily ordeal of obtaining parking at the beginning of a work shift. The allocation of parking spaces expresses the hierarchy among University employees. As one faculty member put it in a recent letter to the editor: “Remember George Orwell: some animals are more equal than others.”⁷ While upper-echelon administrators are granted reserved spaces on campus—many of which stand vacant much of the time—the vast majority of U.C. employees pay exorbitant sums to park in distant parking lots in which they are not guaranteed a spot and which are almost always full by eight in the morning. The search for affordable housing often takes workers to the outer fringes of the Bay Area, which are inaccessible by public transportation. They have no choice but to start every work day with a stressful hunt for a free parking space. Marta is a prime example:

The first problem I have each day is parking. They take the money out of my paycheck, but some days you don't find parking. So, you have to wait sometimes a half an hour and sometimes more. You have to arrive early so that you don't get to work late because of the parking. Today I came at 4 pm [for a 5 pm shift] so that I could get parking and that is what I usually do.

Marta is not the only university worker who pays for the university's stinginess with an hour of her hard-earned free time. Abigail and Cynthia, both administrative assistants, tell similar stories. They pay the University 71 dollars per month for a parking permit, or what they call a “hunting license.” Since the university sells more permits than parking spaces, Abigail explains, there is no guarantee that you will find a parking space on any given day. “If you come after 8:15, you won't find a space.”

Susan also spoke about the parking problem, adding that because it is impossible to find parking after 8 am, she has often had to park in illegal spaces when she is a few minutes late. Consequently, she recently got a \$28 parking ticket, a cost which, when added to her usual permit bill, makes parking an unaffordable expense.

Parking problems are confounded by the fact that managers have little patience with tardiness among employees. “Tardiness is a big deal for custodians,” explains Ralph. “After a certain number of times you are reported tardy, you can be fired. And there is no distinction between excused and unexcused tardiness...What is killing us is the rent. So many people have to commute from as far as 50 miles away.” The unpredictability of the Bay Area's gridlocked traffic coupled with the uncertainty of finding legitimate parking spots mean that many workers worry about being consistently late to work, and consequently about the very real possibility of being fired.

Hal, a custodian who began working for the University five years ago, similarly describes the problems employees face in both paying for and securing parking spots. In order to avoid such expenses and hassles, Hal took a second job working as a custodian ten hours a week at a church close to campus because it provides him with free parking.

Those taking public transportation are not rewarded for their extra travel time with transit passes, even though non-driving workers certainly save the university a great deal of money.

Rachel, a clerical worker, uses public transportation and believes that the university should offer employees discounted transit passes — “something along the lines of what the students at Berkeley have.”⁸ Nola, a part-time clerical worker, describes a choice between expensive public transportation and time-consuming games dodging the “meter maids.” “You have to move your car every two hours, you get parking tickets, and then your supervisors complain about you taking time to move your car.” Like Rachel, Nola wants the university to extend some of the transportation benefits it offers students to its workers. “We should get things like subsidized transportation and parking permits.”

LIFE ON THE EDGE

“I’m right on the edge,” Ryan explains. “If anything bad were to happen, if something out-of-the-ordinary were to come up, I’d be in deep shit!” Ryan is not alone in feeling on edge. The paradox of working for the university is that although workers feel relatively secure about being able to keep their jobs, the wages they earn in these jobs do not make them feel secure in their lives. And struggling day after day to make ends meet takes its toll. As we have shown in this chapter, the strains are not just material. The stress and emotional insecurity of barely (and often not) making ends meet affects everything from the workers’ outlook on life to their sense of self-worth and self-respect to their hopes and dreams for the future.

Recall Michael—the custodian who took a severe pay cut when he began working for the university and has been sinking deeper and deeper into credit card debt ever since. His ongoing struggle to care for his wife and three children has resulted in such a profound and inescapable feeling of despair that he ponders suicide. Stacey is a clerical worker who has given 20 years of her life to the University. After two decades of feeling her hard work undervalued and unappreciated, Stacey is at once outraged and demoralized.

You look at \$14 an hour. I mean \$14 is barely enough to make my rent of \$700 a month. You know what I’m saying? I live here in Berkeley and I’ve seen my salary shrink into a little bit of nothing. I see why people don’t want to stay with the university; it’s because there’s no money here. The university has forgotten that the staff has not had a raise in a long time. They have frozen our salaries for three or four years and we never did get paid the money to catch up after the freeze...Everybody is living day by day, right on the border of homelessness.

Over the past decade, many workers at U.C. Berkeley have had to make do with less than a two percent raise. Adjusted for inflation, this raise actually amounts to a pay cut. As Norah Forster told the *Daily Cal*, “It’s kind of like rubbing salt into the wound. We’ve been getting the rough end of the stick for the last ten years.”⁹

MIND THE GAP

If you ask U.C. Berkeley to explain its salary scale, you will hear much about decreased public funding. During the recession of the early 1990s, the funding for both the University of California and the California State University systems dropped by over half of a billion dollars.¹⁰ Today, the University of California is slated for \$372 million in cuts, pending the Legislature's approval. California's public higher education once again finds itself on the brink of insolvency, in the wake of the 2000-2001 California energy crisis, the legacy of the "three strikes" initiative which created the need for more expensive prisons, and the largest deficit in state history.

While the state's budget crisis has indeed forced the U.C. administration to tighten the belt, the burden of such belt-tightening has been unevenly distributed. A look at U.C. Berkeley's financial history over the past two decades indicates that budgetary constraints do not explain its labor practices. First of all, the university currently depends on the state for less than a quarter of its funding.¹¹ In other words, reduced state funding does not immediately and necessarily translate into reduced salaries. Moreover, in the case of clerical workers, U.C.'s figures show that only a little over a third of clerical units rely on state funds for their salaries. Thus, two-thirds of clerical worker salaries are unaffected by reductions in state funding. Economist Peter Donahue found that despite repeated public statements to the contrary, the university—which has accumulated a \$2.1 billion fund surplus—is perfectly capable of raising the salaries of its underpaid staff.¹²

Second, the funds available do not determine the choices the university makes in allocating them. In the early 1990s, U.C. Berkeley cited budget cuts to justify its failure to provide pay raises commensurate with the rising costs of living. However, just a few years later, when the State of California saw budget surpluses, U.C. Berkeley kept wages stagnant for all but its top administrators. In 2001, when surpluses turned into deficits once again, U.C. administrators announced that budget cuts meant that employees would not receive an expected 4% increase. Yet that same year, they approved pay raises of up to 25% for 49 of the University's top administrators, including former President Richard Atkins and the chancellors at all U.C. campuses. This history demonstrates that wage stagnation at the bottom is due to a lack of will, not a lack of resources.

Over the last decade (1990-2000), clerical salaries have grown only 20%; meanwhile, in the Office of the President, salaries rose 50% between the years 1996 and 2002.¹³ Today, while many U.C. Berkeley workers struggle to make ends meet, at least 180 university administrators enjoy incomes of over \$100,000. Our Chancellor takes home \$390,000.¹⁴

The trend of wage inequality has continued even through the current (2004) fiscal crisis. While the wages of rank and file workers remain stagnant and students are forced to pay dramatically higher tuition (or are simply turned away), the U.C. Board of Regents recently approved a \$75,000 a year salary increase for the Chancellor of U.C. Berkeley and a \$70,000 a year salary increase for the chancellor of U.C. San Diego. Within the previous year, U.C. had already granted a \$100,000 pay raise to the U.C. Provost and a \$78,000 raise to the U.C. Senior Vice President.¹⁵ This inspired the *San Francisco Chronicle* editorial board to exhort the university to stop "mimicking practices that have contributed to the stratospheric salaries of corporate executives," and to act "as a center for higher learning rather than as a profit-making corporation."¹⁶

CHAPTER 2: HEALTH AND SAFETY

If the University's inadequate wages leave workers living on the edge, it makes up for this insecurity in one important area of life: health. Or at least, so it appears at first sight.

Unlike many employers, the University of California offers its full-time employees a comprehensive benefits package, including health, dental and vision insurance and regularly accrued paid sick leave. A brochure for potential employees extols U.C.'s benefits as "The Benefits of Belonging." Indeed, many of U.C.'s employees have been drawn to the university, and have stayed despite its many drawbacks, because it offers them an increasingly rare opportunity to obtain health insurance for themselves, their spouses, and their children. Food service workers in the private sector, for instance, are rarely offered even the most minimal health coverage. Santiago, a custodian, expresses a common sentiment when he comments that his health insurance is "one thing that I like about this job. If my kids get hurt I know it can be taken care of, and I need that. It keeps me going." "It's the benefits," Pablo, another custodian, explains when asked how he copes with the 3 dollar per hour pay cut that he grudgingly took when accepting a job at the university. "The only reason I got this job is because of the benefits."

THE BENEFITS OF BELONGING?

Given U.C. Berkeley's health care coverage, we were disappointed to learn that its commitment to health does not extend to ensuring a safe and healthy work environment. The employees we interviewed frequently reported having suffered injuries which could have easily been averted. Across job classifications and departments, workers described being denied even the most basic injury preventative equipment. One employee summed up the university's attitude towards health and safety concerns as a case of "very fierce neglect."

For example, both custodians and food service workers who work on or around wet floors complain that they are not given slip-resistant shoes. Such shoes, which provide more traction on wet surfaces, are cheap and easy to purchase. Together with her co-workers, Marta, who has worked for the university for seventeen years, has been asking for slip-resistant shoes for over three years. She works in a dormitory dining hall, where water from the dishwashing area and spilled food combined with a fast-paced work routine make slips hard to avoid. The kitchen is filled with dangerous equipment and sharp objects and although it is clearly not a safe place to lose your balance, Marta's requests have been ignored.

University facilities bring special safety concerns. While wringing out a mop, Jessica, a custodian, was accidentally stabbed with a used syringe. Although special receptacles for syringe disposal were subsequently placed in all laboratories, Jessica maintains that she and the other custodial workers continue to find used syringes haphazardly dumped into the waste cans. "Please," Jessica begs us during the interview, "tell the students to respect us!" At the time of the interview, Jessica was working with other members of her union to try to persuade the administration to put first-aid kits on the custodial carts. At a meeting right before the interview, a group of custodians and union representatives met with officials from U.C. Labor Relations to make this demand. At the meeting, Jessica said, university officials argued that they do not have the funds to provide the first-aid kits. Jessica expects the custodians to succeed eventually in getting the kits, but having to fight so hard for something so elementary causes her much grief. Jessica is left with, in her words, the feeling that "I am not even worth the price of a first aid kit."

Despite a growing awareness nation-wide of the dangers of repetitive work using non-ergonomic equipment, workers of all kinds complain that they do not receive the equipment they need until long after they have sustained a repetitive stress injury.¹⁷ One administrative assistant we spoke with complained that there is an extraordinarily long delay between the announcement of a health problem and the eventual delivery of some kind of aid. After she had reported neck and back pain associated with repetitive stress injury, she waited a full eight months for an ergonomic evaluation of her workstation and an additional eight months for the new equipment.

Custodians complain that their supervisors do not take into consideration the strain of repetitive work when delegating responsibilities. Many members of the custodial staff suffer arm and back injuries from the continuous lifting of awkward, heavy trash and recycling bags. At the time of our interviews, many custodians worried that a newly proposed work arrangement called "Team Cleaning"—wherein custodians would work together in teams, dividing up the labor so that each person would perform the same task for the duration of the shift—would increase the number of repetitive stress injuries. "What are they trying to do, kill us?" one custodian exclaimed. This new system "means somebody is going to have to do the trash and nothing else, somebody is going to have to do the floors and nothing else. Can you imagine?"

Those who work in isolated areas after dark are exposed to other dangers. In recent years, the university has increased the resources devoted to campus safety for students. There are now lights in areas students walk through on their way to libraries, emergency phones on the more removed wooded pathways, and campus safety escorts who offer walks to cars or nearby dormitories. But less attention has been paid to employees who work alone in and around empty buildings. For instance, custodians who work in the evening hours complain of being afraid to take trash out to dumpsters in the dark.

Kristina, a 45 year-old custodian who has worked at Berkeley for almost fifteen years, discovered that such fears are well-founded. As is the case for many of the custodians, Kristina used to work alone in a building on campus after most of the building's occupants had left for the day. This prominent campus building is one that remains unlocked 24 hours a day. Part of Kristina's job was to clean the men's bathroom in this building; once inside the bathroom, there was no way to lock the doors while she cleaned. One night, a man came in while she was cleaning the bathroom and attempted to rape her. Kristina was able to escape, but sustained a head injury in the struggle. While she was off work recovering from her attack, another female employee was assaulted and raped in this same building. Other than offering the two women new work assignments in more secure buildings, the university took no steps to increase the safety of those who work alone after dark.

The attempted rape was not the only injury Kristina has suffered at U.C. Berkeley. In the course of her years of service, she has endured numerous other injuries—most related to heavy lifting. Once she tore ligaments in her knee while cleaning and was unable to work for six months. Some years later she strained both of her wrists carrying a heavy load of trash to the bins. Today Kristina has permanently lost part of the functionality of both of her hands and is in constant pain.

As Kristina's account shows, workplace injuries tend to be cumulative. One injury results in a permanent disability which makes performing work safely even more difficult. Meanwhile, looking for work somewhere else is not always an option. When asked if she had ever thought of getting a new job, Kristina replies, "To tell you the truth, no. I haven't really thought of going elsewhere, because at my age, with my hands like they are, who would hire me?"

THE BURDEN OF UNDERSTAFFING

"Everyday we are playing catch-up," Ralph explains, referring to the deleterious impact of understaffing on both the health and safety of the custodians in his unit as well as the quality of services provided to the student residing in campus dormitories. An astonishing number of the employees we interviewed mentioned insufficient staffing and the resulting overwork as one of their primary workplace concerns, a finding that is corroborated by the University's own annual staff survey, entitled "Let's Hear it!" For instance, in 2003, less than half of the respondents (42%) agreed with the statement, "My workload is manageable."¹⁸ Arlene, a clerical worker, tells us that although her office is supposed to be staffed by four people, only three work there. The added stress of taking on a heavier workload leads Arlene to routinely skip lunch breaks because "there's just too much work to do." She is particularly stressed whenever when she can't quickly get students the forms they need. Even though it's not her fault that the office is operating slower than it should because of understaffing, she feels a sense of responsibility to the students. Leora likewise claims that the most frustrating aspect of her job "is that I have too much to do and I'm not able to perform to my own notion of how the job should be done." Pam, a student affairs officer, explained that "in the past, student affairs officer positions were highly coveted because of the opportunity to work with students and be creative and enterprising." "Today," Pam continued, "you very rarely have time to think of creative ways to help students or develop new services for them." Reductions in staff combined with the added work from the decentralization of university offices and the increase in student enrollment have led student affairs officers to feel "more like administrators than advisors." As Pam put it, "Every day is an exercise in crisis management." Pam is not only concerned about the diminished services provided to students, but also about the fact that she is unable to enjoy the most rewarding aspects of her job.

More than anything, however, the employees we interviewed expressed concern about the ways in which understaffing and overwork exacerbate the already high risk of injury in the workplace. Ricardo explained:

They give us many safety trainings to remind us, for example, to wear gloves. But what good are these safety trainings if we are having to cover the work of several janitors? Right now we are down three janitors in our zone, which means we have to do all of their work, in addition to the work of those who call in sick. How can we take care of our safety if we have to work really fast because there's no time? I don't understand. There is such a lack of organization, more than anything, here. Many people would like this job, many people are out there looking for work and I thought that they were already interviewing people, but it has been years... They keep telling us that the situation will be remedied... 'very soon, very soon'... but we don't know what 'very soon' means to them—two years, ten years, who knows? What's happening? We should be making more money for the sheer fact that we're doing all the work for all those people that they haven't replaced!

Sam, a food service worker, had similar complaints about the effects of understaffing on workers' safety in the dining halls. "We tend to do so much—our work and somebody else's—that you get tired and make mistakes. We work around a lot of dangerous instruments—[meat] slicers and big hot kettles—and so I think they go hand in hand: being understaffed and the health and safety problems that we have." On any given day, Sam estimates, seven or eight workers are in the kitchen doing the work of thirteen or fourteen. As for this "doubling up," Sam says, "we don't feel that it's right because we should have at least one or two extra workers to kind of fill in where we come up short. This is one of the main problems we have—being short staffed."

ONLY ABLE BODIES ARE WELCOME

If workers are unprotected against risk, once injured they find themselves shunned. Too many workers return to work disabled, only to find that the university that valued their work when they were able-bodied is not interested in accommodating their new disabilities. Injured workers—in every kind of job—described supervisors' attempts to hound them out of the workplace by means ranging from petty harassment to threats of termination.

Ralph's story is particularly illustrative. Ralph began working for U.C. as a custodian more than a decade ago, when he was in his mid-thirties. After eight years on the job, Ralph strained his back cleaning. He went to the University Health Center, where a doctor advised him to go on disability. Ralph took the doctor's advice, intending to recuperate and return to work as soon as he was able. However, the first sign that he would not be welcomed back came while he was still recovering—in the form of a termination letter. Ralph, who stayed home on doctor's orders because of an injury suffered on the job, was being fired for "excessive tardiness."

The attempt to fire Ralph was down right illegal and a union representative helped him get reinstated. But when he returned to work after the three weeks of disability leave, he received the cold shoulder. No one, he told us pointedly, inquired about his health, or even said so much as "welcome back." Worse yet, his supervisors showed no interest in accommodating his injury. Ralph had a written doctor's note requesting that his employer provide him with a back brace

and a step ladder in order to prevent further injuries. At the time of our interview, three years after his initial injury, he had not received either one.

Why would the university fail to provide such relatively inexpensive pieces of equipment to an injured worker who had cleaned its resident halls for more than a decade? Ralph has an answer: “They don’t care. They are doing it on purpose so people get hurt and leave....In general their purpose is to harass us until we quit.” Understandably, Ralph does not view the university as a community, at least not a community that includes staff members.

We talked to many other workers who told similar stories, some of them shocking. Olivia, a clerical worker and third generation university employee, developed repetitive stress injury due to excessive typing at a non-ergonomic workstation. After having been out on disability for nine months, she described her return to work as nothing less than a “nightmare.” Instead of making the effort to accommodate her work-related injury, Olivia’s supervisor tried to get rid of her. “I think he’d be happy if I just disappeared,” Olivia resolutely declared. She feels stabbed in the back, “I’ve given twenty seven years of my life to this university and now they want to get rid of me?” Another clerical worker who had been on disability for stress-related symptoms was scolded upon her return: “Sandra, if you give us any more trouble we’ll find a way to get rid of you.”

In addition to personal testimony, workers repeated second- and third-hand stories of supervisors who harassed and threatened injured workers. Many employees repeated this Berkeley lore: “If you ask for safety equipment, if you apply for workers’ compensation, or if you go out on disability, you will be punished for it when you return to work.” The experiences of workers like Ralph, Susan, and Sandra teach their co-workers by example. Workers like Julia, who had to go to the hospital after breaking out into a rash once the construction started on Barrows Hall, often refuse to go out on disability, despite the fact that it may take them weeks to heal, because like countless of their colleagues, they are afraid of reprisal. “*Mejor me voy a trabajar*” (It’s better that I go to work), Julia explained, laboring on through pain and injury, afraid to exercise her legal rights to a safe and healthy workplace.

THE VIOLATION OF TRUST

Workers feel insufficiently protected in the workplace and know they will not be welcomed once they have been injured. Yet in their efforts to protect themselves against workplace risks, they find it almost impossible to get basic and straight information from the university about the real dangers that they face in their workplaces. Evasive at best, and purposively secretive at worst, the university systematically violates its own commitment to create an environment of “trust, openness and responsibility.”¹⁹ Results from the University’s “Let’s Hear It!” survey confirm that the university often fails to openly communicate with workers. In 2003, a majority of workers surveyed (52%) did not agree with the statement, “Communication is clear, open, honest, accurate, adequate in amount and encouraged.”

Custodians who work in the science laboratories complain of not having enough information about the potentially hazardous substances they clean up. The problem of poor information is especially troublesome for non-English speaking workers, who cannot read written information on hazardous chemicals. Jerry, a custodian, explained to us that when he first came to Birge Hall, he encountered pipes that dripped a greenish substance. He regularly had to clean the floors below. He started asking questions to find out what this substance was. He was constantly turned away and never given a direct answer. The impossibility of getting clear information seemed to

bother Jerry as much as the possibility of physical illness: “It may have been nothing, but why does it take so goddamn long to get an explanation?” According to Jerry, “The university cops this ‘we know best’ attitude. It’s a game of uninformed consent.” This treatment had bred a certain level of cynicism in Jerry: “I don’t trust anything the university tells me...the university cares about us only insofar as we can be a public relations liability.” In an attempt to take matters into his own hands, Jerry volunteered to go through a one-day training program to become a “safety coach.” “The university is not a safe place to work,” he declares. “But they sure do give a lot of lip service to it [safety]. I don’t think it’s any safer or healthier than it was ten years ago, but they’re pretending like it is by putting volunteer workers like me through these bogus training programs—as if it’s now our responsibility to ensure the safety of the workplace.”

When Pam, a student affairs officer, first developed health problems that she suspected were related to the ongoing construction in Barrows Hall, she decided to find out more about what was going on. She told us about her battle to get a copy of the Material Safety Data Sheet, a document required by OSHA that lists the materials (including chemicals) being introduced into Barrows Hall by construction activities and their impact on humans. As Pam explained, she and her coworkers simply wanted to know about the possibility of toxins being released into the air so they could make an informed decision about the need to move out of Barrows Hall. However, a representative from U.C.’s Capital Project office declined to let Pam and her coworkers see this data. In the end, they had to proceed without this vital information. As Pam sees it, the problem with the Environmental Health and Safety Office is that it is more concerned with legal liability issues than with the safety of the staff. She feels “anger and betrayal at how we were being treated.”

Rena, a campus shuttle bus driver, has also had tremendous difficulty getting clear information from her employer. “It is exasperating, maddening, frustrating, and no one gives you a straight answer.” Rena has a special name for this treatment. She calls it “U.C. speak”—or “flowery, nice language which gets you nowhere.” The difficulty in getting clear information is exacerbated by, if not the direct result of, the decentralized structure of university. According to Bob, a machinist, the decentralization of the university has led to “lots of confusion, including indirect lines of communication and responsibility.” When asked who, specifically, they thought was responsible for ensuring the safety of the workplace, many of our respondents hesitated, deflected the question or vaguely replied, as did Leora: “The problem lies with the university—with whom, I’m not exactly sure.” As another employee metaphorically put it: “U.C. is a multi-headed beast. Who is responsible? The U.C.O.P.? Departments? This is a major problem....Who the hell do we hold accountable?”

NINA’S STORY

Nina was fired after having a heart attack. She had worked for eight years in the mail room of a natural sciences department. At first she enjoyed her work. A couple of years into her job the person in charge of purchasing left the department and Nina was asked to take over his work, in addition to continuing her own work. This was the start of a never-ending pattern in which her supervisor would ask her to do “more and more work” for the same pay. Not surprisingly, her job became “extremely stressful.” In September of 1997 Nina suffered a heart attack. She doesn’t know if work-related stress was the cause of the heart attack, but “it certainly was a big contributor.” Immediately after the heart attack, Nina’s husband contacted her supervisor and faxed her a doctor’s note explaining that Nina could not come to work. A couple of days later someone from

personnel called Nina and warned her: “I want to tell you that there is talk of firing you because we are not accepting your excuse.” Nina was shocked. My supervisor “did not believe that I really had a heart attack” and claimed that the doctor’s note was “not specific enough.” Even though she was in no condition to go anywhere, Nina went back to the cardiologist’s office and asked him to fax another “more specific” note to her supervisor.

The doctor suggested that Nina not return to work until January 1, but Nina felt that her recovery was going well and volunteered to return a month earlier, by December 1. In late November she told her supervisor that she was planning to come back on December 2 instead of December 1. The supervisor responded by telling her: “Ok, you are fired.” Stunned, Nina went in person to the Office of the President and tendered her resignation.

In retrospect, Nina thinks her supervisor was looking for any excuse to get rid of her. “They thought they could hire someone through work-study to do my job at a cheaper rate.” Moreover, she thinks she was fired in retaliation for being a vocal employee. At a staff meeting when all the workers were asked how the unit could save money, Nina suggested, half-kidding, that the “top person step down, and everyone else move up one level”; she explained that, given the top administrators’ salaries, “even if we hired five new people, we would still be saving money.” The supervisors “really didn’t think this was funny.” After she was fired, one of her colleagues asked her supervisor why there was no goodbye party for Nina. Feeling “on the spot,” the supervisor agreed to organize a farewell party, but did not show up. Nina was “not surprised.” Nina ends her story with this thought: “I find it funny that they have a business school on campus where they teach ethics, but they’re not listening to what they are teaching. I used to work at a big private bank and work conditions there were not great, but I never expected that it could be worse at the university.”

CHAPTER 3: DIGNITY AND RESPECT

U.C. Berkeley says it values its workers and regards them as its greatest resource, but the university's actions speak louder than its words. Although many workers have built supportive communities with their colleagues, and some individual supervisors are liked a great deal, workers we talked with feel unappreciated by the university and report a barrage of daily indignities in their encounters with authorities. We were surprised to find that seemingly "minor" indignities caused workers as much anguish as did the "major" injuries of insufficient incomes and unhealthy working conditions. They are as outraged by the intangible insults of such everyday indignities as they are by the concrete economic and physical injuries they suffer.

Why is this the case? Workers' sensitivity to everyday insults is symptomatic of their deeper and more profound disappointment and loss of trust in their employer. Typically, people start work at the university assuming that a public institution dedicated to higher education would also treat its workers as members of a community. Yet sooner or later, each one of them experiences an event, a "crucial test," which tells them that they are simply cogs in a money-making machine rather than human beings who are valued members of a community that comes together to serve a higher educational purpose. During such crucial tests, workers find their health, well-being, comfort, knowledge, or security compromised simply because the university is trying to save time and money. These critical events clarify for them the university's view of its workers as dispensable objects rather than full-fledged human beings; workers are led to the disturbing revelation, "So this is all I am worth to the university!"

Many of the workers describe deep psychological distress at discovering that their humanity is, in itself, not a sufficient reason for the university to address their work-related problems. Instead, they find that the only way to receive recognition from the university is by frightening or annoying it, or by threatening to pose some significant cost to the university that exceeds the cost of solving the initial problem. But even if workers succeed by using such tactics, "winning" in this way does little to ameliorate the humiliation, grief, and anger they feel over needing to struggle to receive basic recognition as human beings and respected members of the university community.

ONE TEST: THE DEATH OF A LOVED ONE

Arlene, a clerical worker at the business school, has given her entire working life to the university. Throughout her career at the university, Arlene has experienced many instances of insensitivity from managers. Her supervisor would regularly get angry if people didn't "keep up" and would frequently belittle Arlene in front of students and act in a way that she found to be "very demeaning." But when Arlene's husband died a few years ago, she experienced the "crucial test" that told her in no uncertain terms how little she matters. Arlene had expected that after 28 years of working for the university, she would receive sympathy and the time and space to grieve her loss. Instead, her supervisor pressured her to come back early from her bereavement leave. Out of a sense of personal commitment to her job, Arlene agreed to cut her bereavement leave short and return to work. But rather than being thanked for her dedication, she was scolded that she has "got to pull her weight."

Thus, at a particularly vulnerable time in her life, when sad events beyond her control created a need for support, Arlene learned that the university saw her not as a dedicated member of its community who needed time to heal from a devastating personal loss, but rather as a temporarily defunct operative to be berated for its malfunctioning or worse, a naughty child to be reprimanded for her bad behavior. This treatment cast her supervisor's day-to-day insensitivity in a new light. No longer could she view this insensitivity as a momentary lapse in judgment. Rather, it became a painful reminder of an underlying lack of respect.

FIEFDOMS AT WORK

The workers we interviewed reported, with striking consistency, feeling unseen, unheard, and unappreciated. An alarming number among them reported abuse and corruption by their supervisors. Such problems were also found by the university's own "Let's Hear It!" survey. In 2003, almost two-thirds (64%) of workers surveyed did not agree with the statement, "employees are treated fairly in my department." Almost half (47%) did not agree with the statement, "I feel recognized and appreciated for my efforts." It is not official university policy to mistreat workers. However, through not-so benign neglect, the university allows such misconduct to occur. The structural root of the problem, so our interviewees say, is that supervisors are given free reign to run their work units as mini-fiefdoms, with wide discretion to treat workers as they wish. In the absence of any effective supervision over how these feudal bosses exercise their authority, actual work conditions vary enormously depending on which particular supervisor a worker happens to receive. Thus, a bad draw in this game of managerial Russian Roulette leaves workers at the mercy of supervisors whose conduct toward them is unprofessional at best, and callous, corrupt, and abusive at worst.

Evidently untrained in the managerial fundamental of providing positive feedback, many supervisors leave workers feeling deeply unappreciated. Abigail, an administrative assistant, feels her work is "overlooked." At the university, "there are no 'thank yous' even for agreeing to do tasks outside your job description." These days, she says, she "doesn't go the extra mile anymore, since it is never appreciated." Colin, a food service worker, complains that although he is a self-described "perfectionist"—waking up around 4 am and getting to work an hour before his shift begins—it took him four years to win "employee of the year." His reward was a piece of paper that said "outstanding employee" and a gift certificate to Macy's. Sounding more hurt than angry, Colin says, "I could cry because I worked so hard for so long before getting any recognition." Hal, a custodian, feels similarly defeated:

We are never good enough. [The semi-annual performance review system ensures that] even if you gave one hundred percent or one hundred and fifty percent of your best, you would still get low scores and their [the university's] argument for that is 'well there is always room for improvement.' So you could never get like straight A's or perfect marks. And of course, if they see you doing really well in your work area, then they just give you more work.

Unfortunately, professors also often leave workers feeling unappreciated. Susan, an administrative assistant, told us of having to work for “disrespectful professors” who snap at her, saying things like “you do this” or getting upset at trivial matters. Another administrative assistant, Angela, feels that the professors she deals with show their lack of respect when they don’t say “hi” in the hallways.

In addition to feeling unappreciated, many workers feel unheard. While Abe has seven years of experience as a custodian, his supervisors “don’t look at us like we know what we are doing...They never ask me what I think as a professional custodian. It is just like ‘you do this’ or ‘you do that.’” When Abe wished to discuss this issue with his supervisors, they “were not even willing to sit down and talk.” Colin, a food service worker, says that for a long time the only venue for worker input was a “suggestion box.” But this box was removed several years ago and now there is no way to be heard by supervisors. Without worker input, the quality of the service has declined, Colin believes, from “four stars” to “three or two” stars. This lack of concern about the employees’ perspective illustrates, in his opinion, that “management does not care about the heart and soul of workers.”

Instead of listening, many supervisors are in the habit of barking commands. Michael, a custodian says his supervisor is hard to get along with because “he’s always right, you know? Whatever it is, he won’t listen to anybody.” Andy, a parking lot attendant, has supervisors who persistently “holler” at him. “They don’t listen to me when I try and talk to them,” he complains. He feels like he is treated as a mere warm body rather than as a person with thoughts and feelings. Stacey, a custodian, feels that “it’s always a chase to get someone to listen to you.” She explains:

We have a lot of problems with our supervisors. They don’t care. They’re not doing anything for us. I know now that if you try to speak out, there is going to be trouble. They can choose if they want to listen to you. That’s no good. They set the rules for whomever they want and it should be equal for everyone.

A common complaint is that supervisors engage in arbitrary exercise of authority which sometimes degenerates into full-blown corruption. Ralph’s former supervisor forced his workers to give him bribes (cigarettes or “gas money”), or else he would “make you work in Siberia.” One time he asked Ralph for gas money. When Ralph told him he didn’t have any money, the supervisor told him he would “cover” for him while he ran to the cash machine. When Ralph refused, he found himself picking up trash outside in the rain.

Workers have little recourse against the arbitrary use of power. Linda, an administrative assistant, described her prior supervisor as putting intense pressure on her and continuously increasing her workload until her job became “unbearable.” When Linda took her situation to the “proper channel” and complained to an “administrative supervisor” about her abusive boss, all she was told is “can’t you adjust?” Linda decided that her only option was to go on disability.

Sandra was harassed by a co-worker. She pleaded for help from her supervisor but was met with deaf ears. Like Linda, Sandra also ended up going on disability for stress-related symptoms. Jessica, a custodian, found her requests to move to a different work location because of an oppressive boss unanswered for years. The request was finally granted, but not before her feelings about the university and its management structure had soured entirely.

In short, while managerial disrespect takes many forms, ranging from simple disregard for the feelings of workers to outright abuse, the university consistently refrains from intervening and protecting workers against out of control supervisors. Based on the workers' stories we conclude that there is no effective system of checks and balances—one that permits workers to evaluate their supervisors and that monitors whether supervisors are repeatedly abusing authority, mistreating workers, or simply ignoring their need for fairness and protection.

STUCK AT THE BOTTOM

Not only do university workers find themselves at the mercy of unchecked managerial power, they also lack a fair and consistent system for receiving promotions. Workers report that their experience on the job and their intimate understanding of the department in which they work are not sufficient to be considered for promotion. Instead, when better positions open, it is common for the university to hire a person from “the outside,” claiming that the latter possesses the necessary degree or the “fresh blood.” However, this new outside person is typically ignorant about the job and must be trained by the long-term insider before being able to assume his or her position.

A number of long-time university workers recall that insiders used to be the preferred candidates for promotions. They say that when supervisor positions opened up in the past, the administration would typically promote an insider who knew the job and only when no old-timer was available would they hire a new entry-level person. However, recently, the university started requiring degrees for managerial candidates. Consequently, even long-time employees now must watch supervisory positions go to outsiders.

Arlene chronicles a particularly poignant incidence of enforced job-stagnation. She had worked in her four-person administrative work unit for twenty years when the supervisory position for her unit opened up. After twenty years of service, Arlene felt qualified to occupy the position. After all, she knew the workings of the office inside and out. The departing supervisor recommended Arlene for the position and trained her for it. Arlene was then asked to perform the role of acting supervisor, but to her immense disappointment, she did not ultimately receive the promotion. She was told the university wanted “fresh blood.” Her hopes of having a career, not just a job, at the university were dashed. Dispirited, she had to conclude that there was simply no chance of moving up from her current job no matter how much experience and expertise she were to gain. To the contrary, she felt that her experience and authoritative understanding were counted against her.

Abigail, an administrative assistant at the business school, has worked at the university for over 20 years. For many years she was an enthusiastic employee. She volunteered to take on the projects that no one else wanted, and would stay late to get the job done. Eight years ago a higher level position became available in her work unit. By that time, Abigail had worked at the university for 12 years, and she felt that given her experience she was as qualified as anyone for this job. However, when she came to work dressed for her interview, her former supervisor treated

the whole interview as a joke, making fun of the fact that she would have taken it seriously enough to dress for the occasion. After this humiliating and painful experience, Abigail never again tried for a promotion. She described herself as being “squashed,” while making a fist, then banging it on the desk as if she was squishing a bug. Abigail is an African-American woman and believes that racial discrimination was an important factor blocking her promotion. As this example illustrates, another consequence of the wide discretion supervisors enjoy within their “fiefdoms” is that it undermines worker’s confidence that they are protected from various forms of prejudice.

Outside the office, on the university grounds, workers also encounter a glass ceiling. Sam has been a gardener on campus for 8 years, with 17 years experience before coming to the U.C. Berkeley campus. One of the “major disappointments” of his professional life was being denied the supervisory position he aspired to occupy. A year ago, when such a position opened up, Sam thought his experience and familiarity with the job easily made him the most qualified candidate. He was especially upset when the person hired over him of him was, in Sam’s words, “from the outside”—not previously an employee of the university. The person who became his manager on the job had a graduate degree. Sam believes that not having a similar degree was the only reason he was not hired.

As Ricardo, a custodian, sums it up: “There is very little motivation among us because we know that even if we do an excellent job at work and show continual improvement, there is no way to climb the job ladder, no way to get a raise. We’ll be making the same thing we made last year.”

EXCLUSION FROM THE CAMPUS COMMUNITY

Chancellor Berdhal has proclaimed that “the university should be a community for those who work here as well as those who learn here.”²⁰ But, much to their disappointment, many workers do not feel part of the campus community they serve. Lack of communication with workers causes them to feel excluded from the goings-on within the university. This feeling of exclusion is voiced most strongly by custodians, kitchen staff, groundskeepers and others whose work does not revolve around computers and who are thus not included in all university-wide communication sent over email. The university has made little attempt to communicate with these workers through other channels. Lack of communication may appear minor compared to the limits to upward mobility and abusive behavior on the part of individual managers. However, it is this routine invisibility of workers in the eyes of the university that many experience as the most painful form of disrespect.

Jerry recalls September 11, 2001: “The Chancellor sent out this bogus message directed toward white collar workers.” The email to the campus community expressed concern with the safety and anxiety of employees and urged supervisors to be flexible with requests for time off. But Jerry was one of only a few custodians who ever found out about this communication, a point that was not lost on him. On the one hand, he was glad to learn of the email. On the other hand, that no effort was made to reach workers like him means “that there are custodians across this campus who never even knew about that message...It’s obvious that the university doesn’t give a damn.”

Even clerical workers who do receive email communication from the university experience exclusion in other ways. The university proudly boasts that workers have the “special

intellectual and cultural advantages of being a member of the U.C. community.”²¹ In practice, the university makes no effort to make cultural and intellectual events open to workers. As Cynthia, a clerical worker, points out, notices of cultural events, such as guest speakers, are usually sent exclusively to faculty and students. Even when workers know about special events, they find it next to impossible to attend them. There is no policy in place that gives workers the time necessary to take advantage of the cultural and intellectual opportunities on campus. Any accommodation is left to the discretion of supervisors. Thus while Linda has always had a special passion to write and would love to take a writing class at Berkeley, her supervisor does not permit her to be away from her office at any time from 8 to 5, making her supposed cultural advantage purely hypothetical. Faced with this stinging reality, Linda says that after 18 years at the university, hearing the platitudes expressed by Chancellor Berdahl make her “ill.” He sends out email messages about caring for community members but “he is totally out of touch with what’s going on for the workers.”

WORKERS’ RESPONSES

Employees of the university have not reacted passively to these working conditions. Some have tried to resist, partly through becoming more active in their unions, but also in other ways, such as by forming informal groups. For example, Olivia formed a women’s group with her colleagues that meets weekly to discuss issues of concern, such as the lack of women in higher positions and gender differences in pay. Their activism and camaraderie, within and outside their union, has sustained these women over the past 27 years.

Overcoming the obstacle of being divided into different work “zones” across campus, custodial workers have managed to build strong communities, often along ethnic lines. More informally, many workers told us about how the camaraderie they share with their co-workers has helped them survive. Dining service workers Ricardo and Debbie described how their colleagues are like a family. The workers joke around with each other to keep their spirits up, and support each other when times are tough. Stacey, a custodian, likewise told us that workers help each other out by “offering to cover their work shift, giving each other a place to stay when necessary, and at times helping out financially when they can.” Stacey repeated that her coworkers’ friendship is one of the main reasons why she has not quit working at the university.

IDEALS BETRAYED

Many university workers have intentionally chosen this workplace as opposed to a for-profit company because they enjoy working for an institution dedicated to knowledge, education, and improving people’s lives. When they start working at the university, employees believe that the university’s mission is, as it claims, to promote “teaching, research and public service.” However, when experience teaches them that the university’s actual priorities are far from educational, workers feel betrayed. In fact, they express as much outrage about the university’s betrayal of its own ideals as they do about the injuries and insults they personally experience in their work lives.

Olivia, an administrative assistant, wants to believe that the university exists to educate. However, her 27 years of experience have taught her that the university’s true focus is not to provide education but to pursue grants from corporations. Likewise, Bob, a machinist, sees that instead of dealing with questions such as homelessness and poverty, or conducting scientific

experiments to accumulate useful knowledge, the university “is trying to make money for corporations.” Referencing the big contracts between corporations and the chemistry and forestry departments, Bob says, “this is completely *nuts*, and it’s contrary to the mission. The university is now mixed up with making money.” Bob believes the “university should be an experimental laboratory for great things,” and that “the idea of the university is to discover truth, report it and make society better.” But, instead of doing scientific research for the benefit of knowledge and society, “the university gears its scientific research to the needs of companies.” Science at Berkeley “is saleable.”

Jerry, a custodian, has an equally cynical attitude about the university and its purpose. He describes the university’ mission as giving “as many yuppie kids as possible a piece of paper... All they care about is their image staying high profile.” Furthermore, “their public relations department is probably more important than any academic department in the whole institution. They care about their image, their ranking.”

Kim, a student affairs officer, echoes the same sentiment: “They will pretty much do anything for money now,” she says. “The question is for how much? Would they do it for a hundred thousand? Would they wait until they got a million? When will we get to the point where we say we won’t be bought?” Given this development, she’s “trying to get out of the habit of saying that we’re a world class university, or saying that we are among the best public universities in the world, because you cannot be that if you do not take care of the people who work here...If you do not take care of human beings you cannot be a world-class anything.”

CONCLUSION: A PRINCIPLED COMMUNITY

During the month of March 2004, when our graduate student research collective was in the process of the final editing for *Berkeley's Betrayal: Wages and Working Conditions at Cal*, top administrators at U.C. Berkeley sent out a survey to "All Berkeley Students" to solicit student input into the formulation of a document entitled, "Principles of Community." In the email accompanying this survey, Chancellor Robert M. Berdahl speaks movingly of this "very important time for building the future of the Cal community." "It is my sincere wish," Berdahl tells students, "that the adoption of a set of 'Principles of Community' will support the dignity, integrity, and intellectual endeavors of all who make Cal part of their lives."

The "Principles of Community" articulate ideals and aspirations befitting a world-class educational community—one which cherishes and fosters honesty and integrity in teaching, learning, research, and administration; civility in speech and interactions; mutual respect for the dignity of all individuals; engagement through leadership and participation; open access to opportunities for learning and development; and finally, caring and support for all campus community members. Such principles outline the commitments of the mythical University of California at Berkeley which exists in our collective imagination—that "vital and diverse educational community ... that strives to transform the lives of all it touches." At this university....

students, staff, and faculty dedicate themselves to personal and academic excellence and share a passion for critical inquiry. Berkeley takes pride in being a safe place for the formation and expression of ideas, providing a rich learning environment and community life rooted in the diversity of its people. The University uses its academic strength to improve everyday life, connecting the individual and the community and emphasizing service to others as a way to contribute to a better world.

This is the university the workers we interviewed came in search of when they took a job "in service of others ... to contribute to a better world." This is not the university they found. The university they found pays them wages insufficient to take care of their most basic needs and the needs of those whom they love. The university they found does not ensure their health and safety

on the job, nor does it provide them with the care they need when they return to work after having been injured. The university they found violates their integrity by withholding information they need to make good judgments about their working environment and about the duties they have to perform. The university they found tolerates uncivil and unfair managerial practices. The university they found does not promote their own rise to leadership or access to opportunities for their learning and development. The university they found does not respect their dignity as individuals.

As we have shown in this report, over and over, the actual wages and working conditions at the university violate the very principles that it seeks to claim as its own. Nor has U.C. Berkeley acted alone. Over the past few decades, across the country, universities have succumbed to the seduction of the for-profit sector's relentless celebration of the bottom line. Rather than resisting the nation-wide trend of deepening inequality and erosion of workplace protections, universities have joined corporations in disregarding the humanity and basic needs of workers at the bottom of the income distribution.

It is time to turn the tide and reclaim the university as an institution that is committed to higher values as an integral part of higher learning. Principles can only be eroded for so long before they become evidently empty shells, losing their meaning and their power to bind together and motivate. As students and employees, we call on incoming Chancellor Birgeneau and on other leaders to step to the plate and make U.C. Berkeley a truly principled community: one which includes those who clean the class rooms, record the grades, prepare the food, and maintain the grounds.

We call on incoming Chancellor Birgeneau to take the following ten steps:

Institute a Living Wage: Full-time university workers must earn wages that are, at minimum, sufficient to cover the basic expenses of a household. This living wage must be automatically adjusted on an annual basis to keep up with changes in the costs of living.

Provide Child Care: Affordable child care must be available for all workers. The university offers on-campus subsidized child care to students. Workers deserve no less.

Guarantee Parking and Transportation: Workers who pay for parking must be guaranteed an actual parking space. To counteract parking congestion, the university should provide employees a Bay Area Transit pass.

Guarantee Safety on the Job: Workers must receive all the equipment they need to be able to safely perform their jobs. Workers must not be asked to perform beyond their capacities. When responsibilities exceed available (wo)manpower, additional workers must be hired.

Re-integrate injured workers: The university must welcome back and make the necessary accommodation for those workers who have been injured on the job.

Guarantee Information: To enable workers to make informed decisions about their health and safety, the university must ensure the smooth and effective flow of information.

Monitor supervisors: Supervisors must be monitored and held accountable for their actions. Work units with high turn-over and injury rates, and any unit with allegations of abuse or discrimination should be subject to investigation.

Promote upward mobility: Workers must have opportunities for advancement. When possible, workers should receive promotions based on work experience and familiarity with the job. Unnecessary credential requirements should be removed.

Promote participation: Structures must be instituted to enable workers to provide input into all aspects of their jobs, including tools and the organization of work itself. Surveys must be anonymous and protections must be put into place against the risk of reprisals.

Grant Community membership: Workers must be recognized as true members of the educational community who are due the full set of benefits that go with such membership. For example, university employees should receive tuition discounts and the flexibility in work schedule necessary to take classes.

Neither administrators, faculty members nor students can afford to ignore the problems highlighted in this report, nor the steps that are necessary to remedy these problems.

The working conditions we have described in this report are symptomatic of a much larger problem which confronts faculty members, students, and workers alike. At this historical juncture in our country's history, the very principles of honesty, integrity, civility, and mutual respect—the fundamental values of an educational community—are at risk.

Nor is it simply principle that is at risk (though principle should be a sufficient argument, especially at a university). The same arguments that have been used to push down workers' wages and squelch criticism of working conditions are also being used to hike up student fees and depress faculty salaries.

It may be tempting to think of students and teachers as belonging to a different category from those whose daily work supports their educational process. However, this false distinction stands in the way of recognizing our common humanity and our common interest in making the principled community we imagine into a real one. Our research has been designed to remove this artificial barrier. Over and over, in the course of the interviews, workers told us how happy they were to discover that students cared about their experiences and their troubles at the university. We hope that readers of this report will take it upon themselves to continue to learn, and educate other students, parents, and alumni, about the lives and working conditions of university workers.

To end U.C. Berkeley's betrayal of its workers, however, we must go beyond educating ourselves and others. We must demand the return of our university to its rightful position as a public institution committed to the principles of higher education as well as to the members of the community that it serves.

APPENDIX: FACTS ABOUT WAGES

FACT 1: Many UC Berkeley employees make less than a living wage

TABLE 1: UC BERKELEY WORKERS MAKING LESS THAN A LIVING WAGE

	Less than \$10.76/hr*	Less than \$16.88/hr**
Food Service Workers	66% (113)	100% (171)
All Service Workers	20% (204)	87% (902)
All Clerical Workers	0.4% (7)	39% (630)

* City of Berkeley living wage (last adjusted in October 2003)

** California Budget Project's estimate of the hourly wage both parents in a 4-person family would need to make in order to achieve a "modest" standard of living in the Bay Area.

FACT 2: Wages at UC Berkeley lag behind those in the private sector and those in many other public universities

The University's Compensation Advisory Committee (CAC) Report found that UC Berkeley wages lag behind the private market.²² As of March 2001:

- Clerical wages lag by 5.7%
- Library Assistants wages lag by 12.2%
- Information Technology positions wages lag by 11.8%
- Custodians/Maintenance Worker wages lag by 2.2%

Furthermore, the starting salary for food service workers at UC Berkeley is \$9.11 per hour, whereas the starting salary for food service workers at Cal State University, Hayward is \$10.98 per hour (nearly 20% higher). The starting salary for custodians at UC Berkeley is \$10.22 per hour, compared to \$11.86 per hour at California State University at Hayward, \$13.33 per hour at Peralta Community College District, \$15.78 per hour at Chabot-Positas Community College, \$15.07 at Alameda County and \$16.90 at the City of Berkeley.²³



Maria Lupe Torres has been working as a Restaurant Cashier at U.C. Berkeley since 1989. She is struggling to raise her two children on her hourly wage of \$11.55 (or \$24,116/year).

FACT 3: Wages have stagnated while cost of living has increased

In 2001, the University's Compensation Advisory Committee (CAC) recommended an average pay raise of 8.8% to bring UC Berkeley salaries up to the regional level. However, over the course of the next 3 years, wages only increased by 1% to 1.5%. During this same period, inflation went up 6.95%, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. This means that already inadequate wages are worth significantly less today than they were in 2001.

Over the past 2 years the wages of service and clerical workers have been frozen. In fiscal year 2003-2004, the University gave these workers a ZERO percent pay increase. Currently (in fiscal year 2004-2005) clerical and service workers are again being offered an increase of ZERO percent. Given inflation, this means that over the past two years workers have taken a pay cut.

FACT 4: Wage stagnation for many has gone together with wage growth for few

Some exceptions to the freeze in salaries at UC Berkeley include:²⁴

- \$78,000 wage increase to UC Senior Vice President Joseph Mullinix in June 2003
- \$100,000 pay raise to UC Provost Marci Greenwood in February 2004
- \$75,000 pay raise to incoming Chancellor Robert Birgeneau over his predecessor in July 2004



Sengliem Saechao, pictured here with her family, works as a custodian for U.C. Berkeley. She earns \$10.57 per hour (\$22.091 per year), well below the \$16.88 hourly wage necessary to support a family in the Bay Area with two adults working full time.

Endnotes

- ¹ “A Message from Chancellor Robert M. Berdahl.” <http://hrweb.berkeley.edu/jobs/whywork/chancellor.htm>
- ² Although the corporatization of the university has been the subject of longstanding concern, what is new about today’s commercial practices, as former Harvard University President Derek Bok put it, is their “unprecedented size and scope.” Bok (2003) argues that not only cuts, but the “entrepreneurial spirit” of professors and administrators, the expectations of donors and trustees, and the competition between universities have also contributed to the corporatization of the university. Derek Bok (2003). *Universities in the Marketplace: The Commercialization of Higher Education*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. pg.2. For further discussion of the restructuring of the university, see Stanley Aronowitz’s *The Knowledge Factory: Dismantling the Corporate University and Creating True Higher Learning* (Beacon Press, 2000), Eric Gould’s *The University in a Corporate Culture* (Yale University Press, 2003), David L. Kirp’s *Shakespeare, Einstein and the Bottom Line: The Marketing of Higher Education* (Harvard University Press, 2003), Randy Martin’s *Chalk Lines: The Politics of Work in the Managed University* (Duke University Press, 1998), and Sheila Slaughter and Larry L. Leslie’s *Academic Capitalism: Politics, Policies and the Entrepreneurial University* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997).
- ³ In 2000, clerical workers in the then relatively flush UC system made 12% less than their counterparts in state offices (“Salary Differences between UC and State Employees.” <http://www.cueunion.org/issues/salarydiff.php>). According to UC’s own research, when compared to prevailing “market wages” in the private sector, UC clerical workers earn 21% less than others doing similar jobs. Clericals at the Berkeley campus, in particular, earn 18% less than others doing similar jobs (“Clerical Unit, SIRS (Exempt) Statewide Market Data,” <http://www.cueunion.org/issues/wagesurvey.php>).
- ⁴ In a two parent family where one parent stays home to take care of the children, the wage-earning parent would need to earn \$23.24 per hour in order to meet these same basic expenses. A single adult with no dependents would need to earn \$13.36 per hour to make ends meet. “Making Ends Meet: How Much Does It Cost to Raise a Family in California?” Report produced by the California Budget Project. October 2003. <http://www.cbp.org/2003/2003MEMfinal.pdf>
- ⁵ Given that workers have received a nominal raise since 2002 (less than %5), we calculated these percentages using \$16 as opposed to \$16.88. Some of the wage data we received was annualized. We estimated hourly wages by dividing the annual figure by 2,000 (forty hours per week times fifty weeks of work per year).

- ⁶ A few months after the interview, we found out that Bruno left his position with the University and found a better paying job elsewhere.
- ⁷ Chernoff, Paul R. "VIPs get rare parking slots at UC." *Berkeley Daily Planet*. August 2, 2002.
- ⁸ Since the fall of 1999, all registered U.C. Berkeley students have been eligible to receive an AC Transit Class Pass—allowing for unlimited rides aboard AC Transit buses and Bear Transit campus shuttles—for a fee of \$18 per semester.
- ⁹ Shy, Leta. "Senior UC Officials May See Pay Raise." *Daily Californian*. November 13, 2001.
- ¹⁰ Wood, James, and Lorena Valenzuela (1997). "The Crisis in Higher Education," Chapter 5, pp. 81-98, in Charles F. Hohm, Ed., *California's Social Problems*. New York: Longman.
- ¹¹ Sedway Group (2001). "Building the Bay Area's Future: A Study of the Economic Impact of the University of California, Berkeley." <http://www.berkeley.edu/econimpact/econ-impact.pdf>
- ¹² Donahue, Peter (2002). "UC's Hidden Wealth: an Analysis of 10 Years of UC's Financial Reports." <http://www.cueunion.org/issues/2002donohue-report.php>
- ¹³ Schevitz, Tanya. "UC Clerical Salaries Lagged in the '90s , Now Workers Want to Catch Up, but State Cupboard is Bare." *San Francisco Chronicle*. Friday, February 28, 2003.
- ¹⁴ Powell, Bonnie Azab. "Incoming Chancellor Robert J. Birgeneau pledges to increase accessibility, funding for UC Berkeley." UC Berkeley NewsCenter (Web Feature: http://www.berkeley.edu/news/media/releases/2004/07/27_chancellor.shtml). July 27, 2004.
- ¹⁵ Schevitz, Tanya. "Big salary increases for UC top brass. Faculty pay is flat, tuition is rising — \$350,000 for new hire." *San Francisco Chronicle*. Thursday, April 22, 2004.
- ¹⁶ Editorial. "Crisis in higher education UC's ill-advised raises." *San Francisco Chronicle*. Friday, April 23, 2004.
- ¹⁷ According to OSHA, musculoskeletal disorders are the fastest growing work related injuries in the United States. The clerical workers' union (CUE) has documented a dramatic increase in the number of repetitive stress injuries among clerical workers in recent years.
- ¹⁸ For more information about this survey, visit: http://bas-avc.berkeley.edu/BalancedScorecard/staff_survey.htm
- ¹⁹ "A Message from Chancellor Robert M. Berdahl." <http://hrweb.berkeley.edu/jobs/whywork/chancellor.htm>
- ²⁰ "A Message from Chancellor Robert M. Berdahl." <http://hrweb.berkeley.edu/jobs/whywork/chancellor.htm>
- ²¹ "The Benefits of Belonging." Report produced by the UC Office of Human Resources and Benefits.
- ²² For more information about this report, visit: <http://sisc.berkeley.edu/cac/default.htm>
- ²³ Comparative Wage Analysis, AFSCME Local 3299, prepared by Faith Raider (September 2004).
- ²⁴ Schevitz, Tanya. "Big salary increases for UC Top Brass." *San Francisco Chronicle*. April 22, 2004.

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